

APPENDIX E

SUCCESS STORIES

1. General. Program success is usually difficult to measure. Each agency has a different means of soliciting program information whether it be a formal after action report, numbers of involved participants, or a simple verbal response as to the leaders' opinions. Objective results can be difficult to glean from the various amounts and styles of reporting.

Your program can overcome this subjectivity by simply going back to the basics. Take into consideration the needs assessment plan, the needs of the community and the benefits expected by the volunteer. All of these have been outlined, referenced and used during the entire volunteer program process from establishing program requirements to implementation. Therefore, to measure success, all that is needed is a cursory review of the anticipated results and the perceived or actual results.

2. Success Stories. The following are actual stories from various Corps sources. The programs were considered prosperous because they met the established objectives. Take a few minutes to read through the narratives. It should become obvious as to why these were considered successful.

a. BILL, Retired Professor of Chemistry. During World War II, Bill performed research for the United States Air Force at Purdue University. He was engaged in the development of an aircraft engine coolant that was neither corrosive nor flammable. After the war, Bill was employed by the University of Chicago at the Argonne National Laboratory. There he researched problems associated with the development of the first nuclear submarine, the Nautilus. The project was directed by Admiral Rickover. Bill is now a retired professor of chemistry from a local private college.

Explaining why he wanted to volunteer, Bill quoted Aristotle through Mortimer Adler. Bill says that he retired from labor, or subsistence work - the kind of work that slaves must do - and is now at liberty to do leisure work, the kind of work that every free citizen ought to do, which is the production of the goods of civilization through the pursuit of the arts and sciences and the institutions of the state and of religion.

An empty Visitor Information Center stood on a Corps project near Bill's home. The community was interested in the recent developments of a hydropower plant, the restoration of a

historical canal and towpath, the story of the organization, and general recreational opportunities. With a limited management staff, the Corps could not afford the time to design and construct exhibits for the Visitor Information Center. Dissemination of the Corps story and its special projects was not meeting the needs of the community.

Three years later, over 4,000 hours had been volunteered by Bill. This time was calculated at a value of more than \$53,000. Projects he worked on include Visitor Information Center displays, project slide shows, a variety of interpretive signs, development of computer programs, revision of the project's operation and maintenance manual and input into this volunteer manual.

b. Nory, Homemaker and College Student. Married for thirteen years and with a 10 year old daughter, Nory and her husband enjoy the outdoors. She spent many hours at the lake fishing with her family. She enjoys practicing the catch and release method and taking care of the natural resources. While her family would continue to fish, she would police the shoreline and parking areas for litter. This added to the pleasure she obtained from her outdoor experience and gave her some quiet time. When she could find the time, she also enjoyed outdoor sports and photography.

One day she appeared at the Corps park office asking if there was any possible way she could volunteer to work in the park. She said she wanted to give something back to the place she visited often and enjoyed so much. She explained that while her family fished, she often found herself picking up litter anyway. So she thought through a formal volunteer agreement she might be able to make a greater contribution.

Although the Corps had an efficient management team, there were many special opportunities and projects they had to forgo due to staffing constraints. The Visitor Information Center had displays and multi-screen slide shows in place, but there was a lack of staff members to staff the building. Therefore, the building remained closed to the public. Area residents wanted to take advantage of this local resource but were unable to do so, due to the lack of personnel.

After she formalized her volunteer work agreement, Nory realized many accomplishments. She created a songbird display and maintained wood duck and bluebirds displays at the Visitor Information Center. She organized, advertised, and conducted the

Sand Castle Sculpture Contest. She was a resident youth camp counsellor and operated the Visitor Information Center. A very special project she undertook was the organization of the 50th anniversary celebration for the project.

Nory enjoyed volunteering at the park so much that she enrolled in a local community college to pursue a degree in Parks and Recreation.

c. Bob, Retired Corps Team Member. Bob began his government service with the United States Army during the Korean Conflict. After a two year tour of duty, Bob returned to civilian life yet continued to work for the Corps of Engineers as a civilian. After 38 years of government service, Bob decided he would like to be his own boss for a while. However Bob maintained his need to fulfill personal satisfaction - the type of satisfaction you get when you help someone have an opportunity they normally would not be exposed to or enjoy. He wanted to volunteer for sheer enjoyment and to help others less fortunate than himself. He enjoyed the outdoors, friendships, travel and volunteering at his church.

The Corps was fortunate to have Bob as part of the management team and definitely felt a loss upon his retirement. The Corps held three day-long and one week-long special events days for the physically, emotionally, and mentally challenged people surrounding their facilities. Funds were not available for many of the expenses and Bob always willingly supplied the necessary money. He did this by making crafts, selling them and donating all proceeds to the special events. Yes, even though he was employed, he made all the crafts on his own time and donated the profits. So, even as a team member he was volunteering for the organization. With Bob retired, the special handicap days were in jeopardy.

Bob asked if he could volunteer to make the crafts and sell them. His crafts ranged from refrigerator magnets to preparing all the floral requirements of large weddings. Twice a year for a total of 12 days, Bob and his friend sell the items in the Federal Building. He also sells to private individuals and at his local Friday night Bingo groups. He reaps enough proceeds to supply ice, beverages, food, gifts, prizes, and snow cone syrup for the special events. He also serves as a resident counsellor for youth camp, conducts programs for local schools on ecology, and senior citizen wildflower programs.

d. Cyndy, Co-op Student. Cyndy had taken some college courses in drafting and mechanical drawing. Not finding that rewarding, she was in a quandary as to what to pursue for a career. She knew she needed additional work experience and was very interested in furthering her knowledge of resource management. Interested in the outdoors, she wanted to make a contribution to the natural and cultural resources in which she had developed an interest.

Cyndy had heard of a Corps project that was accepting volunteers in the resource management area. She spoke with the volunteer coordinator regarding her interest. After the interview it was determined that there was another Corps project located only 10 miles from her residence. The volunteer coordinator assisted her in contacting the office of the other project and she was welcomed into the program.

The second project was understaffed and was having difficulty performing routine resource management assignments. Cyndy conducted recreation use surveys, designed a self guiding nature trail, drew maps and implemented the bluebird nesting program. She had even prepared charts for an inspection team presentation.

It was during that inspection that Cyndy's talents were realized by the inspection team. After further discussion with the management team, her interest in resource management was renewed. She enrolled in a local college and applied to the Corps Cooperative Education Program. She was readily accepted and was able to exceed the benefits she had ever expected to derive from volunteering.

e. Chloe, Retired Corps Team Member. Chloe was a grandmother and a retired Corps secretary after more than 40 years of government service. She enjoyed gardening and through her thoughtfulness shared her harvest with her friends and family. After all those years of reporting for work, she just couldn't break the habit! She enjoyed her clerical position and felt she could make a contribution to the organization that had given her so many good years.

It seemed as though any office could always use some additional clerical support. One project in particular had the need. It had a large land and water base, many land activities, law enforcement problems, growing resource management needs and a shrinking staff.

Chloe volunteered to work there. She served in much the same capacity as she did prior to retirement. She reported for the first shift five days a week and averaged 40 hours per week. In the three years of her volunteer record, she had only reported off a couple times. She also traveled to a secondary site when that secretary was on leave.

f. Bill and Peg, Avid Campers. Bill had just retired from 47 years of service at a local factory and was planning to spend much of his free time camping. He and his wife, Peg, had camped at least two weeks per month every summer at a nearby Corps campground. Over the years they made many friends there and considered it their home away from home.

In their retirement, Bill and Peg volunteered to help the Corps administer the Tent-for-Rent program at the campground. The job seemed easy enough - issue camping equipment, provide area information, meet new friends, and help others. In addition, they would get a free campsite and get to spend all summer in the campground.

Bill takes pride in his "job" as a Corps volunteer. The tents and equipment he maintains are spotless. Peg helps to issue the gear to campers and provides local information based on her years of experience in the area. They make an excellent volunteer team enjoying the opportunity to help others.

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